

Serial No. 10/634,082

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REMARKS

By this amendment, the limitations of claim 3 have been moved into claim 1, and claim 3 has been canceled. In addition, new claims 6-15 have been added. Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Thomas (PN 5,006,952; Applicant-submitted). However, the Examiner appears to have overlooked original claim 3, which includes user controls on a handle. Given that anticipation requires the disclosure of each and every element of a claimed invention, and that Thomas is silent on this feature, original claim 3, now forming part of claim 1, should be rendered allowable.

Claim 6 has been added in the form of a "consisting essentially of" claim, including only two electrically conductive surfaces or electrodes. Thomas clearly needs three surfaces in all embodiments, such that independent claim 6, and those claims which depend therefrom, should be deemed allowable.

New independent claim 10 includes the limitations of a substantially rigid force-sensing element, enabling the handle to be coupled to the baseplate with only slight deflection causing changes in capacitance. It appears that Thomas is not a substantially rigid joystick, and that deflections are possible. In any case, the handle 12 of Thomas is not coupled to the baseplate in a substantially rigid manner. Accordingly, claim 10, and those claims which depend therefrom, should be held allowable as well.

Questions regarding this application may be directed to the undersigned attorney at the telephone facsimile numbers provided.

Respectfully submitted,

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